



**Townsend Town Council Meeting
July 12th, 2023 @ 7:00 pm
VIA CONFERENCE CALL &
Town Hall
141 Main St, Townsend, DE 19734**

7:00 pm Town Council Meeting

I. Call to Order: 7:18 pm

II. Opening Ceremonies

A. Roll Call: Mayor S. Lobdell,
Councilman M. Chapman,
Councilman J. Bangura,
Councilman J. Mertz,
Councilman M. Suhr, Town

Manager A. Tantillo, Town Solicitor L. Hatfield, Town Engineer E. Van-Otoo, Financial Officer J. Helms, and Town Clerk M. Rivera.

B. Pledge of Allegiance: All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Recognition of Visitors: Edgar Dugan, Matt Wilchinski of AT&T FirstNet, Ryan Kelly of ADVANTECH, James Overton of ADVANTECH, Ellen Wolfe, Steve Seidman, and Dwain Haines.

D. Announcements:

1. CM Mertz announced the Delaware State Police are celebrating their 100th year anniversary and encouraged constituents to support any events they may be holding.

III. Citizens Comments & Participation

A. Ms. Wolfe reported:

1. There is a tree blocking a stop sign at Gray Street and Chestnut Street. TM Tantillo confirmed Public Works will evaluate.
2. Trash pickups have been missed for a couple of neighbors and herself on Railroad Ave. TM Tantillo advised she will reach out to GFL.
3. An email was sent to the Town and the Mayor regarding the requirement for an exterminator for a demolition.
4. A suggestion for the Town to send out a welcome packet to new residents. Mayor Lobdell advised emailing CM Mertz as he is the chair for the Community Engagement Committee.

IV. Adoption of Agenda.

A. *CM Mertz made a motion to move item VII.f.i. to item IV.A., strike F.2. and F.3., strike VII.b., and give ADVANTECH an allowance of 10 minutes total to discuss their presentation. CM Suhr seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*

1. Council amended the following:

- a. Moved **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote on Resolution 2023-010 A Resolution to Recognize Councilman Edgar Dugan. To IV.A..

Town Meetings will return to both an in person and a virtual format.

Those wishing to attend virtually may dial **1(301)715-8592**. When directed, provide following meeting ID **827- 6421-7575#** and then the following password **361631#** to enter the meeting. If you choose to access the meeting online click the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82764217575?pwd=aHI4RDhTZ0xiME1HV0ZOcHRxSHZ3QT09>

Residents will be able to view documents posted to the meeting tab on the Town website at <https://townsend.delaware.gov> or by joining the meeting via computer.

b. Allotted ADVANTECH 10 minutes to present their item.

2. Council struck the following:

a. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote on Resolution 2023-011 A Resolution to Recognize Councilwoman Eschalla Clarke.

b. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote on Resolution 2023-012 A Resolution to Recognize Councilwoman Sheryl Rojas.

c. New Castle County Councilman David Carter

B. *CM Bangura made a motion to adopt the agenda. CM Suhr seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*

1. Council adopted the agenda as amended.

V. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote on Resolution 2023-010 A Resolution to Recognize Councilman Edgar Dugan.

1. Mayor Lobdell advised he is sponsoring Resolution 2023-010 A Resolution to Recognize Councilman Edgar Dugan and provided a reading of the resolution.

2. *CM Mertz made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-010 A Resolution to Recognize Councilman Edgar Dugan. CM Chapman seconded the motion.*

a. *Roll Call Vote of Council: CM Bangura – yea, CM Chapman – yea, CM Mertz – yea, and CM Suhr– yea,*

i. Council adopted Resolution 2023-010 A Resolution to Recognize Councilman Edgar Dugan.

3. Mr. Dugan spoke some words of encouragement to Council and advised he is available if needed.

VI. Approval / Rejection of Minutes

A. **ACTION ITEM:** Approval/ Rejection of Town Council Minutes from the June 7th, 2023, Town Council Meeting.

B. **ACTION ITEM:** Approval/ Rejection of Town Council Minutes from the June 21st, 2023, Town Council Special Meeting.

C. **ACTION ITEM:** Approval/ Rejection of Town Council Minutes from the June 21st, 2023, Town Council Special Meeting Executive Session.

D. *CM Chapman made a motion to approve action items V.A. through C.. CM Bangura seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*

1. Council approved the Town Council Minutes from the:

a. June 7th, 2023, Town Council Meeting.

b. June 21st, 2023, Town Council Special Meeting.

c. June 21st, 2023, Town Council Special Meeting Executive Session.

VII. Town Park camera presentation by ADVANTECH.

A. Mr. Kelly advised he and Mr. Overton met with Chief Longo and Sergeant McCloskey to discuss security and surveillance initiatives for the Town. Additionally, ADVANTECH evaluated the Police Department and the Town Park to address these needs. Mr. Kelly briefly explained the reasoning and the service for the quoted items for the Town Park cameras.

- B. Mr. Overton advised video surveillance is valuable for forensic purposes and serves as a deterrent. Additionally, retrieval is remote. Mr. Kelly noted there is a full audit trail for the chain of custody for those obtaining the video footage.
- C. Mr. Wilchinski advised AT&T FirstNet would provide connectivity for data transport.
- D. Council further discussed the following:
 - 1. Mr. Kelly confirmed power is the only infrastructure need. Noting, the equipment is climate controlled.
 - 2. Mr. Kelly confirmed the state contract includes a full two-years of parts and labor warranty. Noting, that after the contract expires a maintenance contract may be offered.
 - 3. Total quote prices, monthly and annual services fees, and AT&T FirstNet charges.
 - a. Mr. Wilchinski confirmed the cameras will only need two AT&T FirstNet devices. Additionally, each will have a monthly charge of \$36.99.
 - 4. Additional equipment option as quoted.
- E. *CM Suhr made a motion to amend the agenda to move the discussion and possible vote regarding the Town Municipal Park Cameras below the ADVANTECH Town Park presentation. CM Chapman seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*
 - 1. Council amended the agenda to move forward with discussion and possible vote regarding the Town Municipal Park Cameras.
- F. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote regarding Town Municipal Park cameras.
 - 1. Chief Longo reminded Council the Police Department has received approximately \$18,000.00. Chief Longo recommended that it would be beneficial for the Town to also accept and obtain the additional camera quoted. Chief Longo noted the cameras provided by ADVANTECH are of good quality and provides the ability to take the photo to Delaware State Police (DSP) for additional clarification if needed.
 - 2. ***CM Mertz, noted on behalf of the Public Safety Committee, he was making a motion to approve the Townsend Police Department Municipal Park Video System for a two-year expenditure immediately \$3,576.00 with a Capital Expenditure of \$49,600.00 by allocating \$18,000.00 from grants funds obtained by Chief Longo and allocating ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds to the remaining costs in the amount of \$35,176.00. CM Chapman seconded the motion.***
 - a. Discussion:
 - i. *See VI.F.1.*
 - b. Citizen comment and participation:
 - i. Ms. Wolfe expressed her support for the Townsend Police Department.
 - c. ***Voice vote of all Council: all yea's.***
 - i. Council approved the Town Municipal Park Cameras through ADVANTECH for an immediate expenditure of \$3,576.00 for a two-year contract. A total Capital expenditure of \$49,600 by allocating \$18,000.00 from grants obtained by Chief Longo and \$35,176.00 from ARPA Funds.

a. Mayor

i. **ACTION ITEM:** Reorganization of Committees by Town Mayor

1. **Finance Committee:** Chair: Mayor Lobdell, Co-Chair: Councilman Bangura
2. **Human Resources Committee:** Chair: Councilman Suhr, Co-Chair: Mayor Lobdell
3. **Public Works and Land Use Development Committee:** Chair: Councilman Bangura, Co-Chair: Councilman Chapman
4. **Public Safety Committee:** Chair: Councilman Suhr, Co-Chair: Councilman Mertz
5. **Community Engagement Committee:** Chair: Councilman Mertz
 - a. Mayor Lobdell noted the Community Engagement Committee requires a lot of work and advised all Council members will be committee members. Additionally, CM Mertz has been appointed as chair for his prior experience in assisting with the Town Fair and Parade.
6. **Code Review Committee:** Chair: Mayor Lobdell, Co-Chair: Councilman Mertz
7. **Social Services Committee:** Chair: Councilman Chapman, Co-Chair: Councilman Suhr
 - a. Mayor Lobdell noted this committee is a combination of the Veteran Committee and the National Wildlife and Historic Preservation Committee.

b. Town of Townsend Police Chief's Report

- i. Mayor Lobdell briefly discussed the Townsend Police Department recruitment. TS Hatfield advised she will work with Chief Longo to determine how to discuss this as an agenda item.
- ii. Chief Longo advised the Townsend Police Department does not have many numbers to compare trends since this is their first official year, however next year he would be able to provide a better comparison. Chief Longo advised other than narcotic crimes, the Townsend Police Department dealt with nuisance or quality of life crimes in the past year.
- iii. CM Bangura stated for the record Chief Longo was very efficient and swiftly responsive to a call reported to the Police Department. CM Bangura noted that he followed procedure as advised by Chief Longo; specifically indicating that the neighbor was encouraged to contact the Townsend Police Department to report any incidents or suspicious persons.
 1. CM Mertz advised he will work on outreach materials to encourage and notify the public on how to properly report concerns to 911.
- iv. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote on doors and security enhancements for the Police station.
 1. Mayor Lobdell noted the previous Council promised to assist the Police Department with any pertinent items necessary, therefore Chief Longo has brought the need for doors and security enhancements for the Police Station.

2. Chief Longo briefly discussed the quoted items and the urgent need for which they have been requested. Chief Longo noted he reached out to the current security vendor and did not receive a response. Additionally, the quote provided is for the entire system.
 3. TM Tantillo advised further discussion regarding specifications should be held in executive session.
 4. FO Helms confirmed the annual service fee for the current security system is \$300.00.
 5. CM Mertz raised concerns with having multiple security vendors.
 6. CM Mertz made a motion to approve the new doors for \$12,330.00 under the ARPA budget and furthermore made a motion to table the second discussion to executive session under a special meeting. CM Chapman seconded.
 - a. Discussion:
 - i. *See VII.B.iv1-iv5.*
 - ii. FO Helms advised the Town's Purchasing Policy states three quotes are needed.
 - b. **MOTION DIED**
 7. *CM Mertz made a motion to table both action items until the next meeting. CM Bangura seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*
 - a. Council tabled the discussion and possible vote on doors and security enhancements for the Police station.
 - b. Chief Longo advised he will obtain additional quotes.
- c. Town Solicitor Lisa Hatfield
- i. TS Hatfield reported she is working with New Castle County (NCC) on the monition's sale for the parcels next to New Castle County Town Park. TS Hatfield explained NCC County's plan is to donate two of the four properties to Townsend after acquired.
 - ii. TS Hatfield reported the encroachments are status quo.
- d. Town Engineer Edwin Van-Otoo
- i. TE Van-Otoo advised further research on the history of the wells is needed for the irrigation at the park.
 - ii. TE Van-Otoo advised LifeHouse Church is reverting back to the original plans, however they want to add a playground to the property. TE Van-Otoo confirmed LifeHouse Church is now in the permitting process. TM Tantillo clarified LifeHouse Church will not be moving forward with the Major Subdivision Application.
 - iii. TE Van-Otoo advised Council may not have previously approved the lighting to be installed at The Woods at Hidden Creek. TE Van-Otoo noted the Town has asked for them to install LED lights, no response has been received from the developers. Additionally, Delmarva does not have many options for LED which may be the cause of no response from the developers.
 - iv. Mayor Lobdell advised he is waiting on a report regarding the Traffic Operational Analysis Study at Karins Boulevard and Route 71. TM Tantillo advised the Rossi

Group would like to hold another public meeting relating to walkability/ pedestrian study.

- v. TE Van-Otoo confirmed a pole barn would be best suited for the Finley Street development area. TE Van-Otto explained a Nation Wetland Permit, is a free permit to move wetlands around on the site. TM Tantillo clarified the permit is to determine feasibility of a buildable site. TE Van-Otoo noted there is an isolated area of wetlands in the middle of the buildable site. Additionally, the Town would need to ensure the Wetlands must be moved in kind and is adaptable at the new location.

e. Town Manager Antonina Tantillo

- i. TS Hatfield confirmed the Board of Adjustment Hearing that is set to occur on July 19th; if someone is aggrieved by this, they may take it to court. Additionally, this does not go to the Planning Commission because it is a land use variance request.
 - 1. TC Rivera clarified the BOA does not need a Planning Commission Member.
- ii. CM Mertz requested more detail on complaints and violations. Advising, it would be more helpful for Council to be aware. TM Tantillo expressed concern with reporting such information as the goal of violations is to encourage residents to comply with the code without fear of feeling shamed at a public meeting. TM Tantillo advised further discussion is needed.
- iii. TM Tantillo advised the Town Charter was successfully voted through the House and Senate and is now awaiting the Governor's signature. Noting, once signed everyone will be notified. CM Mertz suggested to have the Mayor or a member of Council to be present at the session.
- iv. TM Tantillo announced the following item not included in her report:
 - 1. TM Tantillo has received a broad notification that DeIDOT advised that they are looking into traffic patterns on Route 71 and Main Street. Once more information is received it will be shared.
- v. TM Tantillo advised the replacement of the small gazebo is under way. Noting, that if it is under the spending limit it would be purchased, otherwise TM Tantillo will notify the Council. Additionally, the re-dedication of the Gazebo will be brought to the Council's attention.
- vi. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote to authorize the repairs/ replacement of the Town Park gazebo façade.
 - 1. TM Tantillo advised TE Van-Otoo and his team have put together a specification form as attached to the agenda. TM Tantillo confirmed the Town has reached out to all the Contractor's to seek revised quotes; additional quote revisions are- forthcoming.
 - 2. *CM Mertz made a motion to table discussion and vote to authorize the repairs/ replacement of the Town Park gazebo façade until all quotes are received. CM Chapman seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*
 - a. Council tabled the discussion and vote to authorize the repairs/ replacement of the Town Park gazebo façade.

- b. Council awaiting revised quotes based on TE Van-Otoo's specification form.
- vii. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote for Board of Adjustment appointments.
 - 1. TM Tantillo advised that the Town has solicited for BOA members via the Town's newsletter, website, and Facebook. TM Tantillo confirmed the Town has received interest from the following residents:
 - a. Loraine Gorman – is not interested in also serving on the Planning Commission.
 - b. Sheryl Rojas – is not interested in also serving on the Planning Commission.
 - c. Eschalla Clarke – the Town is awaiting a response regarding interest in serving on the Planning Commission.
 - d. Dwaine Haines – is also interested in serving on the Planning Commission.
 - 2. TS Hatfield confirmed the appointment may be made without swearing in, however a public swearing in must be done. Additionally, the Mayor appoints the BOA members, and the Council approves.
 - 3. Council discussed terms and roles of the BOA members per the Town Code. TS Hatfield advised she will research if a member of the public may appeal a decision. CM Mertz suggested that a document explaining the process may be helpful.
 - 4. Council discussed appointment of BOA members. Mr. Haines advised he is interested in serving for two years on the BOA and the Planning Commission.
 - 5. *CM Bangura made a motion to table discussion and possible vote for Board of Adjustment appointments. CM Chapman seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*
 - a. Council tabled the discussion and possible vote for Board of Adjustment appointments.
 - b. The Town will continue to solicit based on terms of service for Planning Commission and BOA members to serve in parallel.

IX. Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee: Chair- Mayor Lobdell, Co-Chair Councilman Bangura

- 1. Review and possible discussion on the May 2023 Budget vs. Actual Reports.
 - a. FO Helms confirmed the General and Police Department revenues exceed expenses by \$136,379.00.
 - b. FO Helms advised that she would provide the annual report in graph form. FO Helms noted this will show the preliminary numbers, as the final report will be completed after the audit.

B. Human Resources Committee: Chair- Suhr, Co-Chair-

- 1. None

C. Public Works & Land Use Development Committee:

1. None

D. Land Use and Development Committee:

1. None

E. Veterans Committee:

1. None

F. Public Safety Committee:

1. None

G. Community Engagement Committee:

1. CM Mertz advised he would like to coordinate with the Townsend Police Department to do a National Night Out event; further discussion regarding feasibility is needed.
2. Discussed possible dates for the Back-to-School Night event; further discussion is needed. CM Mertz requested the Councils' assistance.
3. CM Mertz advised the goal is to have an event every other month. Additionally, he will create a shared outlook calendar with all the members so everyone can put up proposed dates on the calendar. TS Hatfield advised calendar invite is ok if no commentary is provided.

H. Code Review Committee:

1. None

I. National Wildlife and Historic Preservation Committee:

1. None

X. Recess Council Meeting to Convene Executive Session.

A. *CM Bangura made a motion to recess and convene in executive session to address personnel matters. CM Mertz seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's*

1. Council recessed and convened into executive session at 9:21 pm.

XI. Convene Executive Session: Pursuant to 29 Del. C. §10004 (B)(9), the Town Council will consider a motion to meet in executive session for a strategy session, to address personnel matters.

XII. Close Executive Session & Re-convene Council Meeting.

A. Council closed executive session and re-convened the Council Meeting at approximately 10:55 pm.

XIII. ACTION ITEM: Possible vote of Council.

A. No motion made, nor action taken for this agenda item.

XIV. Adjournment.

A. CM made a motion to adjourn the meeting. CM seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.

-
1. Council adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:57 pm.
-